The World of
YAMAHA

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Yamaha Corporation's Global Newsletter

COVER STORY

New Facility Opens in China

A ceremony was held on October 8 to mark the beginning of operations at Xiaoshan Yamaha Musical Instrument Co., Ltd. (Xiaoshan, Zhejiang), a piano components manufacturing facility in China. Since the firm's establishment in March 1997, the factory was built and a new work force was trained, with the first output coming on stream in July 1998.

The venues were adorned with bright red decorations, in the distinctive Chinese style, as approximately 300 staff and guests from throughout Zhejiang Province gathered to witness the grand ceremony. Making the trip from Japan to attend were Yamaha President Mr. Kazukiyo Ishimura and Managing Director Mr. Katsuhiko Kishida. Mr. Ishimura emphasized the importance of the new production base during his address, stating "The fact that we are producing key components for Yamaha pianos, the flagship product line of our brand, at Xiaoshan Yamaha shows it would not be an exaggeration to say that the success or failure of this Xiaoshan Yamaha venture will have a significant impact on the future of the Yamaha Group."

❶The tape–cutting ceremony was held after congratulatory messages from representatives of Zhejiang Province, the Mayor of Xiaoshan, and others.
❷ Exterior view of Xiaoshan Yamaha
❸ Xiaoshan Mayor Mr. Din (far left), Yamaha Corporation President Mr. Ishimura (3rd from right), and Yamaha Managing Director Mr. Kishida (2nd from right) being given a guided tour of the factory by Xiaoshan Yamaha Vice President Mr. Kobayashi (far right)

ANNIVERSARY

"Expo Yamaha '98" Celebrates YDM 40th Anniversary

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the founding of Yamaha de Mexico, S.A. de C.V. (YDM), an event entitled "Expo Yamaha '98" was held at the Mexico City World Trade Center for three days, from November 20 to 22. With the theme of "GRACIAS MEXICO," the festival was a chance for the company to show its appreciation to Mexico's many loyal Yamaha fans, through a magnificent event.

The expo included a comprehensive range of Yamaha brand products, from instruments, professional audio, audio-video, and Yamaha Motor Company's motorcycles and outboard motors. Yamaha Music Schools was also introduced at the expo. And at a 1,200-seat concert area, a program of six concerts was held, including one by popular Mexican group Limite, and another by Armando Manzanero (famous for "Adoro"). The 1998 Junior Original Concert (JOC) in Mexico was also held, and all the concerts played to full houses.

Over the three days, the concerts and expo attracted a total of 27,000 people, easily surpassing earlier expectations. The event's success once again emphasized the high profile of the Yamaha name and its 40-year history in Mexico.

"Expo Yamaha '98"

Government officials from Japan and Mexico visit the site of this remarkable event.

PA/EXPOSITION

D24 Announced at AES Convention

The Audio Engineering Society (AES) Convention, the world's largest professional audio equipment exhibition was held in San Francisco from September 26 to 29. Yamaha used the event to announce its first professional digital recorder, the D24 MO Multitrack Recorder. With the debut of this product, Yamaha is now able to provide a total digital lineup, including both mixers and recorders. The D24 received extremely high ratings from industry commentators, with *EQ* magazine selecting it for the AES Blue Ribbon Award from among all the new products exhibited at the convention.

The 02R v.2 Digital Recording Console, recognized as the de facto standard in digital mixers, also gained a high level of praise, receiving the TEC Award in the Small Format Console Technology category for the second year running at an awards presentation ceremony during the show.

In the analog equipment area, the new GA32/12 Analog Mixer was the focus of plenty of attention, also receiving the Blue Ribbon Award. In the desktop music (DTM) PCI card category, Yamaha promoted its DSP-FACTORY system, featuring software from various companies (such as Steinberg's Cubase VST/24),which achieves a digital mixer/recorder in the PC environment. The O2R interface card TC Unit-Y, developed by TC Electronics, was presented as well, emphasizing the fruits of its cooperative efforts with other industry players.

The D24 MO Multitrack Recorder, which won the AES Blue Ribbon Award for new products

Yamaha's booth at AES Convention. Stevie Wonder visited the booth to try the new Yamaha Tone Module FSR1.

AUDIO VISUAL

Business Partners' Visits Keep AV Division Busy

The Audio Video Division was busy during September and October as a number of its overseas business partners, including the US "big three" dealers and other major overseas distributors, made visits to Japan. First, the Senior Vice-President of Purchasing, Ms. Jayne Spiegelman, and two other executives from Good Guys! in San Francisco, which was Yamaha Electric Corporation's (YEC) number one dealer in the last fiscal year, paid a visit on September 30. At the meeting with the Audio Video Division, both sides contributed to substantial discussions on a range of topics, including an introduction from Good Guys! of their EXPO store format, which will play an important role in a sales strategy that emphasizes the Home Cinema concept, as well as a lively exchange of product requests and product proposals.

On October 21, the Vice-President, Mr. Chuck Cebuhar, for consumer electronics and two Home Cinema products buyers, from Sears, one of America's longest–established department store chains, with 840 branches nationwide, visited Yamaha. And on the following day, Merchadise Manager, Mr. Bill Cody and two senior purchasing executives from Best Buy, the world's largest consumer electronics specialty chain, which began handling Yamaha products on a major scale this year, called in at the Yamaha Headquarters. The meeting reviewed in detail the year's first-half business results, as well as plans for next year.

The Audio Video Division was abuzz through October with visits from a succession of Yamaha's overseas business partners, including the Chinese market's two largest distributors, Tom Lee Music Co., Ltd. and Dah Chong Hong, Ltd., and agents from Brazil, South Africa, Israel and Italy. All the visitors were able to take part in very fruitful meetings, which focused on this and next years' business progress.

A product briefing for the group from Sears: (From right) Mr. Chuck Cebuhar, Ms. Lori Wood and Ms. Bonnie Brisky

The visitors: Mr. Michael Scharff (right), Mr. Mike Mohan from Good Guys! are shown around the Yamaha Headquarters piano factory.

GUITAR

UK Guitar Dealers Tour Taiwan and Japan

Yamaha-Kemble Music (U.K.) Ltd. (YK) organized a tour in early October that included a practical demonstration of the manufacturing process at Kaohsiung Yamaha Co., Ltd. in Taiwan, as well as a visit to the Yamaha Headquarters factories in Hamamatsu, Japan. The tour party of 15 included staff from the UK's top ten guitar dealers, journalists from "Guitarist" (UK's No.1 guitar magazine) and staff from YK.

The Kaohsiung Yamaha visit consisted of a factory tour and a chance for the party members to try their hand at body coloration and assembly work on the Pacifica312 electric guitar. All the group seemed particularly impressed by aspects such as "the balance between automated and manual processes" and "the sincere efforts to address environmental issues" at Kaohsiung.

At the Yamaha Headquarters factory in Hamamatsu, the group observed the grand piano assembly operations, acoustic guitar manufacturing processes at the Iida Factory, and also visited the Tenryu handcrafted guitar production workshops. This visit, too, gave the whole group a greater insight into the high quality of Yamaha guitars.

The group try their hand at guitar body coloration at Kaohsiung Yamaha.

Keenly observing the gluing of acoustic guitar back braces at Yamaha's Iida Factory

EXPOSITION

See and Hear the Future—COMDEX Fall '98

The world's largest personal computing-related trade show, COMDEX Fall '98, was held from November 16 to 20 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Despite the fact that this year's show seemed to feature less of the raw energy and overcrowding seen in previous years, 2,400 companies exhibited at COMDEX this year, drawing 220,000 visitors, both figures surpassing previous records.

COMDEX Fall '98 attracted 220,000 visitors over five days

At the Yamaha booth, which adopted the theme "See and Hear the Future," a variety of multimedia products such as CD-RW drives, the XG sound card, portable keyboards and PC external speaker systems were displayed. All kinds of product demos were mixed and matched to show off the versatility and quality of Yamaha products to a huge number of visitors at the show.

In the CD-RW drive category, one of the standout new products attracting a lot of attention was the CRW4416 CD-RW drive that boasts up to 4x speed for data overwriting and 16x speed for data reading. And to give us a good idea of where the latest technology trends are headed, Yamaha also displayed a number of test models such as a 6x speed data writing model, a model which is able to also read from DVD-ROM disks and a portable model. The large number of questions from visitors about these test models proved just how high the expectations are among the public for the next generation of products.

Amid the excitement of the show, Yamaha enjoyed a number of substantive talks concerning future business expansion.

EXPOSITION

Central and Eastern Europeans Flock to "Yamaha Days"

The Export Division of Yamaha Europa GmbH (YE), which is in charge of exporting and marketing to Russia and 21 other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, is energetically pursuing a strategy to significantly boost the profile of the Yamaha brand throughout this huge burgeoning market.

Since 1997, YE has joined forces with importers in each country to promote a series of expos and events under the title "Yamaha Days." The programs have included concert tours by artists such as guitarist Mike Stern and drummer Akira Jimbo, along with workshops conducted by these top musicians. Digital professional audio (PA) seminars for people in the broadcasting and recording industries have also helped to gain wide exposure for Yamaha's digital PA equipment in these markets.

In October, a very successful series of "Yamaha Days" was held in seven cities throughout Poland that included concerts and workshops, attracting some 8,000 participants. So this autumn, every day somewhere in Central or Eastern Europe, Yamaha was introduced, and the number of Yamaha fans keeps on growing.

Visitors enthusiastically try out the clarinets, drums and DTX at the "Yamaha Days" in Skopje, Macedonia (left) and Wroclaw, Poland (right).

WORKSHOP

Ignacio Berroa Clinics Woo Latin American Drummers

Yamaha drum artist Ignacio Berroa went on the road twice in 1998 to do drumming clinic tours in Central and South America. The first stage took place in May, with the second stage following in September–October. The tours covered six countries–Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Venezuela and Colombia–with the highly successful series of clinics being held at seven venues, for a total of over 500 participants. Ignacio Berroa is a Cuban-born artist based in Miami, with strengths in both jazz and Latin music genres. And since his mother tongue is Spanish, Mr. Berroa was popular among all the drummers who came to the sessions, providing an excellent opportunity for him to show off the high quality of Yamaha drum products. The tour's organizer, Yamaha de Panama, S.A. (YDP), has seen robust growth in sales for its drum lineup, including the Stage Custom range.

Ignacio Berroa's clinics in Spanish proved extremely popular with the participating drummers.

PIANO

16 Grands Create "Pianofortissimo" in Melbourne

"Pianofortissimo!", a mass piano concert featuring 16 Yamaha grand pianos, including two CFIIISs, was held in Melbourne for the very first time on 30 September. The highlight was a superb performance of Ravel's *Boléro* by 16 brilliant pianists. Well–known overseas artists Philippe Cassard and Klaus Hellwig, and leading Australian pianists performed in "Pianofortissimo!" with 12 young talented pianists. The audience was mesmerized by the artistry of these pianists and the music from Yamaha's magnificent grand pianos. It was a night to remember.

160 fingers of 32 hands perform Ravel's *Boléro*.

"Think New Value" Theme for Yamaha Technology Exhibition '98

Yamaha Technology Exhibition '98 (organizer: Technological Strategic Committee, Yamaha Corporation) was held on November 26 and 27 at the Yamaha Headquarters in Hamamatsu.

It was the fourth time that this biennial exhibition has been held. By sharing the latest technological trends in each division and at Yamaha affiliates, it is hoped that "fusion" of these technologies will help us find new possibilities. Popular products such as Yamaha's silent series were created in this way. Under this year's chosen theme of "Think New Value," the exhibits were arranged into various categories such as "The Environment" and "Multimedia." Lectures and technology exchange seminars were also held in conjunction with the exhibition, making it a truly multifaceted spectacle.

Over the two days, approximately 2,000 people from Yamaha and its affiliates visited the exhibition, and many were amazed at the wide range of technologies put on show by Yamaha Group companies. Exhibit staff were seen fielding many questions from eager members of the Yamaha Group.

Exhibiting companies:
Yamaha Corporation;
Yamaha Livingtec Corporation;
Yamaha Fine Technologies Co., Ltd.;
Yamaha Metanix Corporation;
Yamaha-Olin Metal Corporation:
Yamaha Music Foundation

Around 80 of the latest technologies from Yamaha were introduced at the exhibition.

MTV and Yamaha Hold "Band Alert" Contest

"The MTV Band Alert with Yamaha" contest is being held from October to December in six Asian countries and territories (China, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Taiwan), jointly organized by Yamaha and MTV Networks Asia, the Asian youth-oriented satellite music channel.

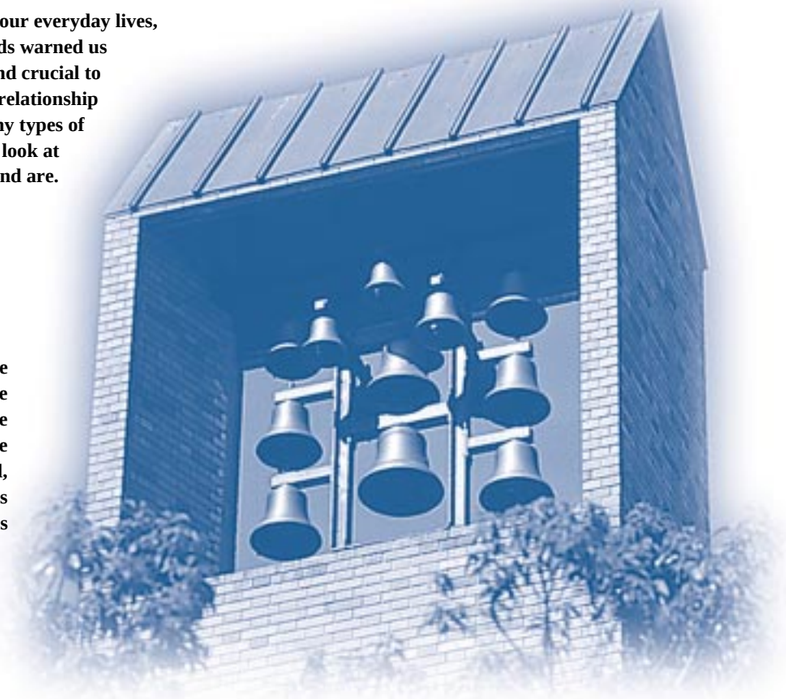
The first band contest in China's 4,000-year history took place in Shanghai, China on November 15, and was a great success. Other national finals have been held in each country by December, 1998. A special program covering the contest is due to air on MTV Asia sometime in January 1999.

Kakegawa Plant and YEM Both Gain ISO14001

Following the success of fellow group member, Yamaha Kagoshima Semiconductor Inc., in November 1997, the Kakegawa Plant in Japan which manufactures pianos, and Yamaha Electronics Manufacturing (M) Sdn. Bhd. (YEM) in Malaysia, which produces audio equipment, have both acquired ISO14001 certification based on the international environmental management system. The Kakegawa Plant was awarded the ISO14001 by the Japan Audit and Certification Organization for Environment and Quality on November 24, while YEM acquired theirs from SIRIM QAS Sdn. Bhd. (Malaysia) on December 2. The ISO14001 certification has now been awarded to a total of three Yamaha Group members.

What Sounds Can Do Part 1

Natural sounds and man-made sounds, audible sounds and inaudible sounds. In our everyday lives, we are constantly surrounded by a multitude of sounds. In primitive times, sounds warned us of impending danger, or alerted us to the presence of game animals, making sound crucial to our survival. Later, language, tools and music were born, rapidly deepening the relationship between people and sound. Over time, the human race has produced a great many types of sounds, using them in all variety of settings. So in this issue, we will take a closer look at what sounds can be used for, and what the future possibilities for harnessing sound are.



(Basic Functions)

[Informing]

The ring of a telephone, chime of a clock, or a siren . . . the function of these sounds is to "inform" or "convey information." For example, in Europe the church clock told people what time it was, from around the 5th century. Nowadays, our society has come to be filled with all description of bells and alarms. A movement is gaining momentum to examine more closely the significance of sound within the relationship between man and his environment.

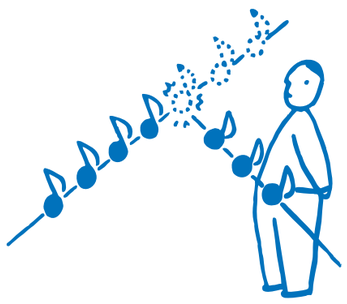
[Arousing an Image]

Listening to sounds activates the human imagination. If we hear the sound of waves, a seaside scene springs to mind, and if we hear the sound of a steak sizzling on a hot grill, we involuntarily begin to salivate. As these examples illustrate, sound has the power to arouse sight and taste images in people's minds.

(Commonly Used Functions)

[Eliminating Sound]

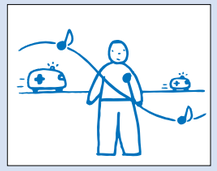
Modern comforts such as a quiet air conditioner or a quiet car interior have been made possible through technology that uses sound to eliminate unwanted noise. As we discussed in a previous issue, sound consists of waves transmitted through the air, so if you hit a sound wave with another wave of the same shape but a 180-degree opposite direction you can wipe it out. This is a technological way of canceling out sound using the laws of physics, but there are also other subtle ways of erasing sound which are used in our daily lives–for instance, background music played in a restaurant or hospital. By layering another sound over the unwanted noise, you can achieve a masking* effect over the noise (See the box on the next page).



[Examining]

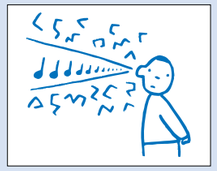
A doctor places his hand on a patient's chest, and he then taps it with his other hand. Almost everyone has had this type of experience at a medical check-up. From the sound's loudness, pitch and reverberation the doctor can distinguish the amount of air inside the patient's body, as well as diagnose the shape, size, position and condition of each organ. And using a stethoscope to directly listen to the body's sounds, such as heartbeat and respiration, is also a general examination practice. This is the same principle as when we tap a watermelon to check how ripe it is, or flick a crystal glass to determine its quality.

Tidbits of Knowledge Relating to Sound—Various Effects



1. Doppler Effect

This is a physical phenomenon that occurs when a sound source is moving, changing the sound's frequency, and making the pitch sound different. A common example of this is the pitch of an ambulance siren, which becomes higher as it is coming towards you, and lower as it gets further away. This principle is used in sensor technology that utilizes sound.



2. Masking Effect

This is where one sound is disturbed by another, making it difficult to hear. This is the phenomenon which makes hearing a voice over the telephone difficult in a crowded or noisy place. By using this masking effect in a positive way it becomes possible to get rid of unwanted noises, and is also useful for compressing data quantity when transmitting sound information.

3. Cocktail Party Effect

This is a listening skill whereby a person is able to pick out and only hear a particular sound from among a multiple mix of sounds. At a lively cocktail party, for instance, being able to listen to only a particular conversation is thanks to this effect. It is believed to be a very advanced skill whereby sound entering the eardrum is firstly broken down into its constituent ingredients, then certain clues are used to reintegrate sounds from each source separately.

Research into Sound that "Informs"

Many people are startled if they hear the sound of an alarm or siren, but a siren's original purpose, as well as warning people of some danger, also includes steering people calmly towards the next action that is necessary. To achieve such an outcome, then, what kind of sound is most suitable? You need to find a sound that will grab people's attention without causing an excessive level of stress. For example, in the case of a chime to signify a train's departure, a sound is needed that can be heard sufficiently even in a noisy place, while not being so loud that it causes discomfort. Since technology and expertise have made rapid strides in collecting and synthesizing sounds, it has now become possible to produce sounds like this, which at first glance seem to have an incompatible set of requirements.

(Functions That Are Being Researched)

[Raising]

There is the notion that says if you play good music to a plant it will grow more quickly. Through the development of biotechnology, it has become possible to measure plants' pulses in a similar way to how we measure humans' brain waves. The findings from such research show that plants can be put into a relaxed state, similar to its human equivalent, by using music that conforms to certain rules. The research is being pursued with the aim of growing plants faster and with greater yield than has previously been possible. Along similar lines are the research projects being done in a number of countries that use sound to tame fish, so that a stable fishery stock can be secured in the context of large sea-based fish farms.

[Identification]

The voice becomes a key to opening doors or activating a computer. Research on these kinds of voice-based personal identification systems is also quite popular. While recognizing a person's unique vocal characteristics, these systems simultaneously analyze word accent and pronunciation in order to determine an individual's particular characteristics. However, one of the major problems that needs to be addressed by further research is that people's voices and speech patterns tend to change over time or depending on the environment and their body condition. So with such a large number of variable factors involved, it becomes vital to either extract a particularly stable individual trait, or design a system that has a built-in learning function to cope with changes.

●

In Part 1 we have looked at how the "sounds" we can hear are used in all kinds of applications, and at the different types of research being undertaken in relation to utilizing sound. In our next issue, Part 2 will delve into the "sounds" that humans cannot hear, introducing the capabilities of ultrasonic waves. The uses of sound are expanding into an even wider variety of fields.

Cooperation: Yamaha Corporation, Sound Laboratory Project

Silent Series

Following the Silent Electric Violin, the Launch of the Silent Electric Cello

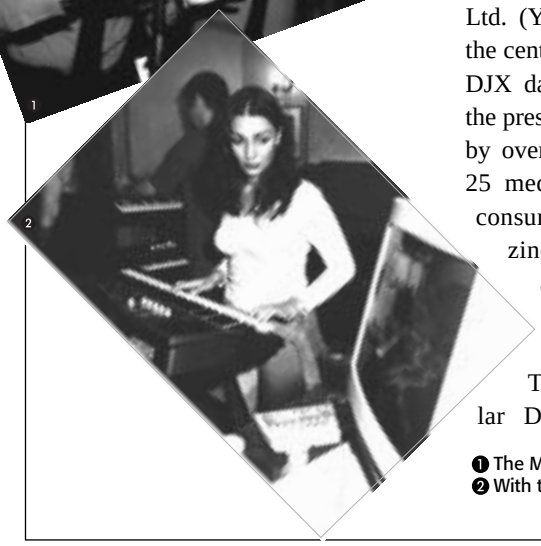
Silent Electric Cello SVC100

Following on from last year's highly successful Silent Electric Violin(SV) launch, the market is now eagerly awaiting the imminent arrival of the Silent Electric Cello(SVC) this winter. A press announcement was held in New York on December 10, while in Japan, where it has already gone on sale, the company is being stretched to keep up with the number of orders. Even overseas, the SVC has already received rave reviews at the many events it has been shown as a demonstration product. There is a feeling of great expectation in the market.

Meanwhile, here is a quick update on what has been happening with the Silent Electric Violin(SV):

- When the maestro Isaac Stern visited Japan, he had a chance to try out the SV and rated it very highly.
- In the UK at MIA(Music Industries Association)1998 Music Industry Awards, the SV was the winner of the Best Stringed Instrument section. The award was decided through voting by MIA retail members. MIA consists of both retailer and supplier membership with over 200 companies.
- One of the UK's four major museums, the Science Museum in London, plans to place the SV and SVC in their millennium display collection in 1999.

Enjoying the MIA Ceremony, at which the Silent Violin received an award, are Mr. Roy Kemble (left), Operations Director of the YK Acoustic Division and Mr. Russell Jones (right), Chairman of the National Music Council.



DJX Goes Live in London

Yamaha-Kemble Music (U.K.) Ltd. (YK) chose an Irish pub in the center of London to launch the DJX dance machine keyboard to the press. The launch was attended by over 100 representatives from 25 media organizations such as consumer and lifestyle magazines, as well as television and radio companies including the BBC, MTV and SKY television.

Two of the UK's most popular DJs, Mark Radcliffe and Mark Riley from BBC Radio One, showcased the DJX together with students from Paul McCartney's School for Performing Arts.

YK has already received strong national media coverage for the DJX across all media through a string of celebrity endorsements, and an alliance with recording giant Polygram. This has helped the DJX win a number of technology awards, including "Best DJ/ Home Studio Product."

❶ The MCs for the launch, popular DJ duo Mark Radcliffe and Mark Riley.
❷ With the DJX, you too can easily enjoy the fun of DJ-ing.

YAMAHA CORPORATION Public Relations Division 2-17-11, Takanawa, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-8568, Japan Tel: 81-3-5488-6601 Fax: 81-3-5488-5060 http://www.yamaha.co.jp

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